

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

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1. An electronic device comprising:
 - 2 a user-interface feature configurable to have a selected orientation about at least a first axis;
 - 3 a detection mechanism to detect orientation information about the electronic device; and
 - 4 one or more components configured to select the orientation of the user-interface feature
 - 5 based on the detected orientation information, and to configure the user-interface
 - 6 feature according to the selected orientation, wherein the selected orientation is based
 - 7 on at least a first reference point on the first axis.
 2. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein the user-interface feature is
 - 2 symmetrically disposed about a first axis, and wherein the selected orientation
 - 3 defines a reference indication on the first axis.
 3. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein the user-interface feature is
 - 2 symmetrically disposed about a first axis and a second axis, and wherein the
 - 3 selected orientation defines a first reference indication on the first axis, and a
 - 4 second reference indication on a second axis.
 4. The electronic device of claim 2, wherein the user-interface feature
 - 2 includes a display, and wherein the one or more components select the
 - 3 orientation by selecting a top-down direction on the first axis for displaying
 - 4 content on the display.

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1 5. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein the user-interface feature
2 includes a set of buttons disposed symmetrically about the first axis, wherein
3 the one or more components include a processor that selects the orientation of
4 the set of buttons by specifying a reference indication that defines a position of
5 each button relative to the first axis, and wherein the processor assigns a
6 function from a set of functions to each of the plurality of buttons based on the
7 position of each button.

1 6. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein the one or more components
2 include a processor.

1 7. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein one or more components
2 include a display driver.

1 8. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein the detection mechanism
2 includes a plurality of sensor areas that detect user-contact.

1 9. The electronic device of claim 8, wherein the plurality of sensor areas
2 detect orientation information by being individually actuatable so that one or
3 more actuated sensor areas form a select portion of the plurality of sensors that
4 combine to define the orientation information.

1 10. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein the detection mechanisms
2 includes a first actuatable surface and a second actuatable surface, wherein
3 orientation information is detected by determining which of the first and second
4 actuatable surface is actuated by user-contact.

1 11. The electronic device of claim 10, wherein the orientation is selected so
2 as to configure the user-interface feature for left-handedness or right-
3 handedness when one of the first or second actuatable surfaces is actuated.

1 12. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein the user-interface feature is a
2 handwriting input mechanism, and wherein the one or more components include
3 a processor that selects the orientation of the handwriting input mechanism to be
4 either for a left-handed user or a right-handed user depending on the orientation
5 information detected by the detection mechanism.

1 13. The electronic device of claim 10, wherein the plurality of sensor areas
2 are arranged to detect a user's hand orientation when the user grips the
3 electronic device.

1 14. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein the user-interface feature
2 includes a digital input feature of a display, and wherein the one or more
3 components configure the user-interface feature according to the selected
4 orientation by determining a position of the digital input feature on the display.

1 15. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein the one or more components
2 select the orientation of the user-interface feature based on the detected
3 orientation information only if the electronic device is first determined to not
4 have been in active use for a set duration of time.

1 16. A method for configuring a electronic device, the method comprising:

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2 detecting at least one user-contact in a plurality of possible detectable user-
3 contacts with the electronic device;
4 interpreting an orientation for a user-interface feature from the detected one or
5 more user-contacts; and
6 configuring the user-interface feature according to the interpreted orientation.

1 17. The method of claim 16, wherein interpreting an orientation for a user-
2 interface feature from the detected one or more user-contacts includes
3 determining a reference indication of the user-interface feature about one or
4 more axes from the one or more contacts.

1 18. The method of claim 17, further comprising determining reference
2 indication about one or more axes that the user-interface feature is
3 symmetrically disposed about.

1 19. The method of claim 17, wherein determining the reference indication
2 includes determining a direction for content appearing on a display.

1 20. The method of claim 17, wherein configuring the user-interface feature
2 according to the interpreted orientation includes assigning an action to each
3 button in a button set using the reference indication.

1 21. The method of claim 16, wherein detecting at least one user-contact in a
2 plurality of possible detectable user-contacts with the electronic device includes
3 detecting a first button press from a set of at least two or more possible button
4 presses.

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22. The method of claim 16, wherein detecting at least one user-contact in a plurality of possible detectable user-contacts with the electronic device includes detecting a grip configuration of a user from one or more sensors on a housing of the electronic device.

23. The method of claim 16, wherein interpreting an orientation for a user-interface feature includes determining a top-down vertical orientation for a display on the electronic device, and wherein configuring the user-interface feature includes configuring the display so as to display content according to the top-down vertical orientation.

24. The method of claim 16, wherein interpreting an orientation for a user-interface feature includes determining a right-left horizontal orientation for a display on the electronic device, and wherein configuring the user-interface feature includes configuring the display so as to display content according to the right-left horizontal orientation.

25. The method of claim 16, wherein interpreting an orientation for a user-interface feature includes identifying the orientation of a digital input mechanism on a display of the electronic device.

26. The method of claim 25, wherein identifying the orientation of a digital input mechanism on a display of the electronic device includes selecting a position of a handwriting input area on the display of the electronic device.

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1 27. The method of claim 26, wherein identifying the orientation of a digital
2 input mechanism on a display of the electronic device includes selecting an
3 arrangement of multiple character entry boxes for the handwriting input area
4 appearing on the display.

1 28. The method of claim 16, wherein interpreting an orientation for a user-
2 interface feature includes identifying a reference indication for the user-
3 interface feature based on the detected one or more user-contacts.

1 29. An electronic device comprising:
2 a display disposed symmetrically about one or more axes, the display being configurable to
3 have a selected orientation based on a reference indication on the one or more axes;
4 a detection mechanism to detect orientation information of the electronic device in use; and
5 one or more components configured to automatically determine the reference indication and
6 to select the orientation of the display based on the determined reference indication.

1 30. The electronic device of claim 28, where the reference indication identifies at least
2 one of a top-down direction or right-left direction of the display.

31. An electronic device comprising:

- a set of actuatable surfaces disposed symmetrically about one or more axes, the set of actuatable surfaces being configurable to have a selected orientation based on a reference indication on the one or more axes;
- a detection mechanism to detect orientation information of the electronic device in use; and
- one or more components configured to automatically determine the reference indication and to select the orientation of the set of actuatable surfaces based on the determined reference indication

1 32. The electronic device of claim 31, wherein the orientation of the set of actuatable
2 surfaces defines an action assigned to each button in the set of buttons.